

INTERNATIONAL MILITARY TRIBUNAL FOR THE FAR EAST

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, et al)

) - AGAINST -

) -ARAKI, SADAO, et al

) A F F I D A V I T

I, OKADA, Keisuke, make oath and say as follows:

I was born in Fukui Prefecture, Japan, in 1867. I was graduated from the Naval Academy in 1899, after which I was a career man in the Japanese Navy until 1920, having held the following positions during those years:

1904-05	Division Officer on Naniwa; later Captain (Fleet Admiral TOGO in Command)
1908	Captain
1912	Commanding Officer, Kashima
1913	Rear Admiral, Commandant, Sasebo Navy Yard
1917	Vice-Admiral Commander-in-Chief, Sasebo Navy Yard

From 1920 to 1936 I held the following positions in the Japanese Government and Navy:

1920	Vice Minister of Navy
1924	Admiral, Member Supreme War Council
1924 Dec.	Commander-in-Chief Combined Fleet
1927	Commander-in-Chief Yokosuka Naval Station
1927	Minister of Navy in TANAKA Cabinet
1929 July	Resigned with Cabinet; Member Supreme Military Council
1932	Minister of Navy in SAITO Cabinet
1933 Jan.	Retired and placed on Navy Reserve List
1934 March 8 1936	Premier

In the years 1920 to 1936, during which period I served in the capacities of Vice Minister of the Navy, Minister of the Navy in the TANAKA Cabinet, Supreme War Councillor, Minister of Navy in the SAITO Cabinet and Premier of Japan, in order intelligently and effectively to perform the official duties and discharge the responsibilities of those offices, it was my duty to, and I did employ, all available official channels of information to keep myself as fully informed as possible concerning the contemporaneous problems, happenings, issues and events. Such avenues of information included, among others, reports from and conferences with executive and administrative officials and personnel on my respective staffs, conferences with fellow cabinet members, the respective premiers, members of the Diet and other government officials, all of whom likewise had access to similar sources of information concerning such subject matters; cabinet meetings, liaison conferences, meetings of the Supreme War Council and other government agencies; and also official government reports, releases, etc. On the basis of information thus obtained, I endeavored to and did take, with respect to contemporaneous issues and problems, such official action in the discharge of my official duties and responsibilities as under the circumstances appeared to be meet and proper.

During my tenure of office as Minister of Navy in the TANAKA Cabinet, (1927-1929) Japan claimed to have acquired by treaties, agreements, etc. substantial rights and interests in Manchuria. It was the policy of the TANAKA Cabinet, through collaboration with Manchurian authorities to expand and develop such rights and interests to the fullest extent possible. In the administration and application of this policy with respect to Manchuria, the TANAKA Cabinet was considerably more energetic, affirmative and positive than its predecessor cabinet had been.

In connection with this program, TANAKA planned to collaborate with and use Chang Tso-lin, who was then Marshal and defacto ruler of Manchuria. While Chang Tso-lin was opposed to many of the Japanese demands, TANAKA's bargaining and trading power with him lay in the support which Japan might lend to the maintenance of his position of leadership in Manchuria. Japan had lent him considerable support, particularly in connection with the Kuo Sung-lin Mutiny in 1925.

The TANAKA Cabinet felt that it was making substantial progress in expanding Japan's interests in Manchuria through the support of and collaboration with Chang Tso-lin, although TANAKA invariably took the position, and so advised Chang Tso-lin, that he should return to Manchuria and concern himself solely with Manchurian affairs.

In 1928, when the armies of Chang Tso-lin suffered defeat at the hands of the Kuomintang Army, TANAKA again advised him to withdraw his armies into Manchuria before it was too late. The Marshal was obliged to take this advice on this occasion because of his embarrassed military position.

By this time the Japanese army in Manchuria with headquarters in Mukden under General HONJO had become dissatisfied with the policy of the TANAKA Cabinet to collaborate and negotiate with Chang Tso-lin with respect to Japan's interests in Manchuria, did not want to wait on negotiations and were impatient to employ force to occupy Manchuria. A clique or group of officers in this army, which had completely isolated General HONJO and shut him off from communication with the affairs of the army, planned and plotted the murder of Chang Tso-lin upon his return to Manchuria. They arranged on June 4, 1928, that the train on which Chang Tso-lin was traveling from Peiping to Mukden should be wrecked by explosives placed on the track just outside Mukden. Chang Tso-lin was killed in this wreck as planned. This incident plotted and instituted by the clique in the Kwantung Army represented the first overt army move during the TANAKA regime to project itself into the formulation of the policies of the government. The occurrence greatly embarrassed and prejudiced the program of the TANAKA Cabinet with respect to Manchuria and created a crisis which ultimately resulted in its resignation. The Cabinet learned of the occurrence immediately, and was taken completely by surprise and became greatly concerned. Premier

TANAKA expressed great regret and grave concern, and went to the Imperial Palace and made a full report of the occurrence to the Emperor. Upon his return from the palace the Premier (TANAKA) summoned the Minister of War (General SHIRAKAWA) and myself for a conference, at which he announced that the Emperor told him (TANAKA) that he (the Emperor) considered that this was the time to take strong disciplinary action with respect to the army, and that he expected adequate measures to be taken. He (TANAKA) stated that he was determined that appropriate steps should be taken to maintain discipline in the army. The Minister of War (General SHIRAKAWA) and I expressed hearty support of TANAKA's determination. However, when the War Minister took the matter up in the War Ministry, he encountered such strong opposition on the part of the General Staff and other army officers, that he was unable to make any headway or progress whatsoever. The War Minister so reported to TANAKA and myself, and stated that this opposition on the part of the army was based upon the view that to take steps to punish those responsible for this event would be to expose to the public something which the army wished at the time to conceal.

Shortly thereafter TANAKA called me alone for a consultation on the subject, and advised me that he planned to do something about the matter himself. This I also agreed with, but the army opposition to disciplinary action was so strong that TANAKA was unable to accomplish anything either. By this time this issue and the attitude of the army had become a controversial subject in circles outside of the cabinet, even in political parties, and the impotency of the cabinet to control and discipline the army forced its resignation on July 1, 1929.

After the murder of Chang Tso-lin, the influence of the army insofar as participation in the formulation of policy on the part of the government with respect to Manchuria was concerned grew progressively stronger. During the period between the fall of the TANAKA Cabinet in July of 1929, and the establishment of the SAITO Cabinet in 1932, I served in the capacity of a member of the Supreme War Council. During this period I often had occasion to discuss with incumbent cabinet members and other statesmen and government officials, who visited me in my home or whom I met on public and social occasions, the serious concern on the part of some in the Japanese government with respect to the philosophy of the army that the Manchurian problems could never be solved short of the use of force to establish a Japanese puppet government there. This disposition on the part of the Japanese army and the inability of the government to control it created a great deal of anxiety on my part. During this period it became apparent to all in Japan who concerned themselves with matters of state that it was only a question of time until the army should undertake the occupation of Manchuria. In the early part of 1931 I received many reports that the army was planning an occurrence which might be made the basis for the occupation of Manchuria. Simultaneously OKAWA, Shumei was conducting a propaganda campaign consisting of public speeches and publications to the end of building up a public sentiment in support of such a movement on the part of the army. I recall my annoyance when it came to my attention that OKAWA had made such a speech at the Naval Academy; it was especially irritating to me that such a man should be allowed to speak before the cadets.

When I came into the SAITO Cabinet as Minister of the Navy in 1932, I learned from reports which I had made to me in order to make myself acquainted with the events of recent months and from conversations and conferences which I held with fellow cabinet members and other government officials, that the occurrence which came to pass on the night of September 18, 1931, was plotted and arranged by the clique in the Kwantung Army, and also that it was not of sufficient gravity to warrant the subsequent action taken by that army in its occupation of Manchuria. The army during these years was completely out of control by the government and no restraint could be placed upon it. This information supplemented and corroborated information which I had obtained from contemporaneous press reports, government releases, contacts with other government officials during the period interim the fall of the TANAKA Cabinet and the establishment of the SAITO Cabinet. As previously stated, it was an assumed fact in government circles in the early part of 1931, that it was only a question of time until the army would make a move to occupy Manchuria by force. I knew that OKAWA, Shumei, a political leader, was definitely identified with this movement on the part of the Kwantung Army at that time. There were many young officers in the Kwantung Army also involved, whose names I do not recall now. The occupation of Manchuria came to pass in the latter part of 1931, with the so-called Mukden Incident of September 18, 1931, as its beginning, and did not take any enlightened public official of Japan by any surprise. All of the Japanese armed forces in the area were brought into operation immediately, including the Korean Army, which crossed the border and participated in this occupation without any Imperial sanction. This became known as the "Crossing the Border" Incident, which created quite a profound issue in government circles at that time. While I did not have specific first-hand information as to some of the foregoing facts before or contemporaneously with their occurrence, I learned about each and every one of them through official channels in the immediate period of their occurrence, and they became accepted facts and premises in government circles at the time upon the basis of which official action by government officials was taken.

The SAITO Cabinet which came into office in May of 1932, in which, as previously stated, I was Minister of the Navy, and my cabinet, which came into office in July of 1934, were known in government and army circles as "Navy Cabinets." The army resented both of these cabinets, because it recognized in them navy influence in opposition to the army policy of the use of force in connection with the expansion of Japanese influence in Asia. The army knew that the reason the navy had been asked to form these cabinets was to prevent the military from having their way with respect to the use of force, and throughout their incumbency the army continued its efforts to overthrow the navy influence in the Japanese government. Many occurrences came to pass during the tenures of these cabinets demonstrative of this army resentment, culminating in the attempt at my assassination in February of 1936, which resulted in the assassination of my brother-in-law, Mr. MATSUO, who was mistaken for me. This occurrence was a spontaneous outbreak of resentment on the part of a group of young officers in the army against the incumbent government's lack of sympathy with the ambitions of the military. It constituted an embarrassing situation to the Emperor in that it was somewhat of a public manifestation of the inability of my cabinet to control the military, and ultimately brought about the resignation of my cabinet in March of 1936.

After the occupation of Manchuria, the Kwantung Army was the real government there, although a so-called independent government was set up in Manchuria in the early part of 1932, whose independence was supposedly recognized by Japan in September of that year. This government was completely dominated and controlled by the Kwantung Army. The government of Japan had no way of learning what the plans and activities of the Kwantung Army were in those years. The army was completely without the control of the Japanese government and remained so up until the Great War in 1941. This was and remains a great pity and shame for the sake of Japan's leadership among nations, and has always caused me untold anxiety and anguish. Japan has been done a most grave injustice.

s/K. Okada

OKADA, Keisuke

Sworn and subscribed to before the undersigned Officer by the above-named OKADA, Keisuke, at the War Ministry Building, Tokyo, Japan, this 29th day of May, 1946

s/Theodore Goulsby Lt. Col., CAV.
Ex. Officer, IPS, GHQ, SCAP

C E R T I F I C A T E

I, TAKAHASHI, Wataru, HEREBY CERTIFY That I am fully conversant with the Japanese and English languages, and that I, this day, read the foregoing Affidavit to the above-named OKADA, Keisuke in Japanese, and in so doing, truly and correctly translated the contents thereof from English into Japanese; and that said OKADA, Keisuke stated to me that the contents of said Affidavit were the truth, and that he was willing to sign said Affidavit under oath; and that said OKADA, Keisuke was duly sworn in my presence and signed said Affidavit under oath in my presence; and that all proceedings incidental to the administration of said oath and the signing of said Affidavit were truly and correctly translated from Japanese into English and English into Japanese and fully understood and comprehended by said Affiant.

Dated this 29th day of May, 1946, at Tokyo, Japan.

s/ W. Takahashi

TAKAHASHI, Wataru